

THE
POPISH DOCTRINE
OF
Justification by WORKS,
CONSIDER'D;

IN A
SERMON
AT
PINNERS-HALL,

Feb. 11, 1734-5.

By THOMAS BRADBURY.

Job xxxii. 10. *I also will shew mine Opinion.*

L O N D O N :

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(Price 6d.)

THE
TOPISH DOCTRINE

Justification by Works
CONSIDERED;

IN A
SERMON

PREACHED AT
ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH

BY THOMAS BRADBURY

At the Anniversary of the late King's Death.

LONDON:
Printed for J. GARRARD, at the Rose and Crown in the
Temple near St. Dunstons Church. 1752.
(Price 6d.)



ROMANS iv. 3.

Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for Righteousness.

HAVING proved that the thing imputed to us for Righteousness is the Active and Passive Obedience of Christ; I shall now consider the Opposition that is made to this Doctrine, and especially by those, who tell us that our own Duty to the Law of God is that, for which we are justify'd, pardon'd, and accepted: To this I shall answer in five Particulars.

First, We allow, and in the name of God demand these Works of Righteousness, 'Tis what he requires of us, to do Justly, to love Mercy, and to walk ^{Mic. vi.} Humbly with our God. We follow Right- ^{8.}eousness, Faith, Charity, Peace, with them ^{2 Tim. ii.} that call on the Name of the Lord out of a pure Heart. This you must hold fast, and not let it go, because it cuts ^{22.} off

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off occasion from those that desire occasion:
 Rom. iii. 8. For we are *slanderosly reported*, and some affirm that we say; Let us do Evil that Good may come of it, whose Damnation is just.

The main Cry of the *Papists* is, That we lay aside Works, and do our utmost to trample down Practical Religion: And others who say they are *Protestants*, but are not, like the Dogs of the street, fall a barking after them. But far be it from us! This is Tit. iii. 8. a faithful Saying, and *what we affirm constantly*, That they who believe in God must be careful to maintain good Works.

I hope we may appeal both to what you *bear* from the Pulpit, and what you *see* in our Lives. Let our Conversations answer for us: And take your notions of what we *Think*, from what we *Do*. We have not *behav'd* ourselves disorderly among you; we have *wronged no man*, we have *corrupted no man*, we have *defrauded no man*. I do not speak of a perfect Obedience; for in many things, we offend all; and have no reason to make our boast before *Men*, who have so much in our temper and actions to humble us before *God*. But it is notorious, that many who will give their Works a place in *Justification*, make a very little shew of them in a way of *Sanctification*; walking after the course of this World, fulfilling the Lusts of the Flesh, and of the Mind. Nay, the *Charity* they boast of is rather the *Twang*,
 than

2 Theff.

iii. 7.

2 Cor. vii.

2.

than the *Temper* of a Party: They can cry it up as a screen to them, who are *against the Truth*, and run it down when they have to do with those that are *for it*. However, let us all follow the things that make for Peace; and those wherein one may edify another. We must shew our *Works out of a good Conversation*.

Secondly, We can no otherwise be justify'd before Men than by a Faith, that works in Love and Honesty, in Charity, Patience and Holiness with Sobriety. The Apostle James Jam. ii. applies to some, who talked of *shewing their Faith without Works*; but himself was none of that number. He says, I will shew thee my Faith by my Works. And he might well expose the Vanity of these blown Bladders, who think Prating is equivalent to Practice: *If a Man say, I have Faith, and have not Works, can Faith save him?* These noisy Professors, who talk of the Truth without any Temper, and act *against* it without any Guard, are the empty Drums of a Church, all Sound and no Musick. Your Professions are no better than *profane and vain babblings*, if you do not *exercise your selves unto Godliness*. By Works thou art to be justify'd or condemn'd, that is, before Men. They neither can, nor ought to form any Judgment of you but by your Actions. But,

Thirdly, What is there in resting upon Christ, that hinders my abounding in Duty? or what is there in the abundance of Duty, that should hinder our dependence upon Christ? I have already blamed those, by whom Faith and Works are *not united*; But what must I think of those, by whom they are *oppos'd* to one another? Though we lament the unruly Walk of some, that are *for* the Truth; yet this is almost the universal Abuse that we have from those that *deny* it.

If people were to *think* of us, by what these perverse Disputers *say* of us, they would suppose, that we preach up the Doctrine of an Imputed Righteousness, not to make Men holy, but careless; as if it was the Work of our Ministry, that they should be *without Law to God*; whereas it is our perpetual Affirmation, that though we are redeem'd from being *under the Law*, as a Covenant of Works; yet we are *under the Law to Christ*, as one Article in the Covenant of Grace.

Phil. ii.
13.

Cannot I use the utmost endeavours in *working out my own Salvation* with fear and trembling, and yet believe that when I have done all, I am an *unprofitable servant*; and that it is *God who works in me* to will and to do of his own good-pleasure? The Apostle found these things consistent enough.

— iii. 3. We *worship God*, says he, *in the Spirit*, and have

have no confidence in the Flesh ; but all *our rejoicing in Christ Jesus.*

On the other hand, Where is the difficulty of mentioning Christ's *Righteousness*, even *his only* ; and yet *looking diligently* that we do not fail of the Grace of God ? Will any one argue, that if I am *justify'd*, there is no need to be *sanctify'd* ? Or, That I may have a Title to Heaven, without a Meetness for it ? There never was a Person in all the World, That believ'd the *Privilege* of a Justification, who did not feel the *Power* of a Sanctification : And though he rejoiced in the former as *Compleat*, yet he mourned over the latter as *Imperfect*.

Fourthly, To talk of Justification before God *by our Works*, after he has told us so often it is *by Faith*, is striking home both at the Law and Gospel. 'Tis against the Doctrine of the Law to say, that it will accept of an *imperfect Righteousness* : 'Tis against the Doctrine of the Gospel for us to refuse a *perfect one*. If we can recommend ourselves to God, by any thing less than a compleat Obedience, we make the Law a Lyar ; and if we can do it without an interest in the compleat Obedience of another, we make the Gospel a Trifle. We do not only rest upon that which *will* fail us, but we refuse that which *will not*. *If the First Covenant had been faultless, there should have been*

been no room for the second. If we either could do all that the Law requires, or that the Law would have required no more than we could do, there was no need of Christ. But here is the double folly of Unbelief, a Complication of Wickedness, that we say our own Righteousness *shall* save us, which *cannot*; and the Righteousness of Christ *shall not*, which only *can*.

Fifthly, By the confession of our Opposers, a moral Righteousness will not do. Tho' this is the boast of their Words, it is what they contradict in Things: for what need is there of any *superstitious Exuberance*, if doing justly, and loving Mercy is enough? There is no occasion for Holy-days of their own contriving, Penances, and bodily Severities, Figures of the Cross, and a company of Monkey-tricks in making them; if the Cross of Christ is of no value in a way of *Atonement*, it can be of none in this method of *Conjuration*. It is but a just Revenge for us to reject a Righteousness, which God *has not requir'd*, when they have stript us of one that *he has*.

This last Head I shall pursue a little farther, as it goes into the very Heart of *Pope-ry*. 'Tis their Darling, their *Dagon*, the Pillar upon which the House stands, and if it falls, down comes the Fabrick. 'Tis in vain to attack it in the *Out-works*, if People resolve

resolve to give them no disturbance in the *Garrison*. A Man that makes a Jest of *imputed Righteousness*, which is the only Doctrine of Salvation by Jesus Christ, is an ill-chosen Advocate in the Cause of the Reformation : he is *building again* that which our Fathers *destroy'd*, and so makes either them ^{Gal. ii.} *or himself a Transgressor*. There were no *such Protestants* in the whole World, at the time that God began to break the Yoke of Rome, and loose the Bands from our necks. *Jehovah our Righteousness*, was the Name ^{Jer.} by which they called a Redeemer; not a ^{xxiii. 6.} soul among them had any doubt about his being either *Jehovah*, or the Author of an eternal *Righteousness*.

The Spirit was *poured out from on high* in great abundance, upon all sorts and degrees of Men; the Professors in *Oxford* and *Cambridge*, were of the same Opinion with the Martyrs at *Smithfield* and *Tyburn*. Not only our *burning*, but our *shining Lights* had a Zeal for the Faith of God, and the Testimony of Jesus. And as *Truth sprung out of the Earth*, this *Righteousness* looked down from Heaven, like the Sun bursting out of a Cloud; the Light came darting, spreading, swelling with such a sweep of Glory, as carried all Opposition before it.

Indeed the *Work* itself, as well as the Cause, was *Religion*; that is, a thing, not merely to be *disputed* and argued, but *felt*,
and

Isa. xlv.
24, 25.

and followed. And as they found their *De-
fire* was for nothing but Heaven, so their
Dependence was upon *none but Christ*. In
the Lord, did every *one* say for himself, have
I Righteousness and Strength: To him did
Men come in Flocks, in Crouds, in Drovers, in
Churches; and in this Lord were all the
Seed of *Israel* to be justified and glory.

Confessions of Faith, Articles, Summa-
ries, Declarations, and Catechisms, were the
First-fruits of the Reformation, in every
Place where they had received the Truth:
and these will be enduring Monuments what
their way of thinking was *then*. Those
learned Persons who have aimed at the know-
ledge of the Times and Seasons, are of opi-
nion, that the Age in which this mighty
Revolution happened for the Christian
Church, is the Period mentioned in *Revel.*
xiv. 6. where we read of *an Angel flying
through the midst of Heaven, and preaching
the everlasting Gospel*. If that was the day
when those words were fulfilled, the De-
scription is noble, and the Work was equal
to it: 'Twas a thing done with so much Ex-
pedition and Evidence, as if every Preacher
had been indeed a *flying Angel*; the Scene
of Action was so publick and open, as if it
was *in the midst of Heaven*; and the thing
made known among them is called *the e-
verlasting Gospel*, never to be altered from
what it then was, but committed to *faith-
ful*

ful men, who should hold fast *the faithful word*, as they had been taught ; which chiefly consisted of these three things :

1st, That we have the *Command of God* for the Rule of his *Worship*, and never think to approach him with a Religion engraven by art or Man's device. Hereupon the House was immediately swept and garnish'd ; Ceremonies of many ages were no longer valuable for their Antiquity, but their Rust and Canker witness'd against them, and so they came to be brush'd off by heaps ; and the People call'd upon the Name of the Lord with a *pure Language*.

2dly, Another Principle was, that the *Righteousness of God* is the ground of his *Favour*. He hath set forth Christ as *a Pro-* Rom. iii.
pitiation for sin, through Faith in his blood. 23.

Pardons were no longer a piece of human Traffick, a branch of worldly Trade, a Craft by which some got their Wealth, and others lost their Senses ; but the Reformation made them talk afresh as Christians did at the first, *that the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin.*

3dly, It was universally own'd, that we must have *the Operation of God* for the produce of his Image in us, and the promoting of any Duties by us. *We are his Workman-* Ephes. ii.
ship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good 10.
works : so that you may comprehend the whole Cause of the Reformation in this ac-
C count :

count: That Religion as a *Practice*, is what God *requir'd*; as a *Privilege*, it is what he has *declar'd*; and as a *Principle*, it is what he has *implanted*. Thus was the Church of Christ, when it look'd forth *like the Morning*, clear as the Sun, fair as the Moon, and terrible as an Army with Banners. They overcame by *the blood of the Lamb*, and *the word of their Testimony* to it.

John xvi.
9, 10.

Only here I would observe one thing, that though the Reformation was not equal in all Places in the matter of *Superstition*, yet it prevail'd every where in settling the doctrine of *Justification*. They had some difference among them about ceremonial Actions, and Times, and Garments, and Orders; but none at all about the *Terms of a Sinner's acceptance with God*: he had shewn them *the path of life*. The Spirit that convinced every particular Soul of *Sin*, and made him feel the Plague of his own heart, convinced them all of a *Righteousness*, that flows from Christ's going to the Father, and their seeing him no more: they knew the only *hope that was set before them*; and for some years they continued as they were planted, a *noble Vine*, wholly a right Seed.

But the Enemy who could not hinder the *Wheat*, threw in the *Tares*, and endeavour'd to spoil what they were not able to sink. As Men grew *lovers of their own selves*, covetous, proud, and boasters, they became *Inven-*
ters

ters of evil things; they left the paths of *Uprightness*, to walk in the ways of *Darkness*. Alas! they wanted the Ballast of a *wounded Spirit*, and having no Conviction of *Sin*, talked like those that had none of *Righteousness*; they departed from the holy Commandment delivered to them, and returned to that which they had *vomited up*: what was nauseous at first, became palatable afterwards; and in every Particular of the Reformation that I have mentioned, they *turn'd their Glory into Shame*.

First, They run back into the Gauderies of Superstition; crossing, cringing, bending, bowing, which were all supported by that vain Imagination, that God dwells in *Temples made with hands*. Though *bodily Exercise* profiteth little, it was promoted with penal Laws. Precepts of Men directed the Worship of God: and the Ways of Devotion that the Bible never said a word of, were made the Terms of our observing it. The *Liberty* wherewith Christ has made us free was thrown off, and we again entangled in the Yoke of *Bondage*. We had chang'd our Masters, but not our Captivity; as if *Israel* was still to be a *scatter'd Sheep*, and the *Lions* were to drive him away; first Jer. l. 17. the King of *Affyria* devour'd him, and at last this *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon* broke his Bones. And,

Secondly, As they that keep company with *Harlots* spend their Substance, so it was here. The great Doctrine of *Justification by the Righteousness of Christ* came to be dash'd, defil'd, and diminish'd, and at last denied. Faith, that was altogether employed in *looking out to a Hope before them*, was now turned into an *Hope within them*.

Thirdly, As they trampled under foot the Son of God in his Authority, and counted the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing in his Purchase, they *did despite unto the Spirit of Grace*. His Operations were at first neglected, and then blasphemed, as if it was all *Enthusiasm*, and a piece of vanity and vapour to talk of depending on him. The *Socinians* and *Arminians* gave us up again to the Doctrines of *Popery*, that every *Confession of Faith* rejected with Abhorrence: and our *Ecclesiastical Authorities* cover'd the Worship of God with the *Attire of an Harlot*, which had been laid aside with contempt, when we hated even *the Garments that were spotted with the Flesh*.

Since that time the Cause of God has been kept alive, but not in a national way. It does not so much subsist in *Synods* and *Councils*, as in the private Experience of Believers, and the voluntary Association of those Churches who stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind, *striving together for the Faith of the Gospel*.

As

As to this great Article that I am now upon, God's Acceptance of *Abraham*, they that are found in the *Principle* of Faith, who know what it is to believe to the saving of the Soul, they will be so in the *Profession* too. They love to *hear* what they have *felt*, and to *feel* what they have *heard*. To them the Doctrine of the Cross is precious; and their Esteem for the Gospel is founded on this, that therein *the Righteousness of God is revealed from Faith to Faith*. This is the great Article of the *Reformation*; and this the main Glory of *Christianity*. And, as I said, we have a Testimony to the Truth of an imputed Righteousness, even from those who profess to deny it; only ours is an Imputation of *God's making*, and theirs is a thing of *their own*. How we hope to be pardoned, and purified, and saved, you have heard: In distinction to this way,

First, Their great Confidence is in *Man*. They suppose there is a Power lodg'd in a Set of People to *forgive Sins*; and so what we call *Justification*, which is the Act of God, is no more with them than an *Absolution*, which is plainly the work of *Man*. But the Scripture has pronounced a Curse upon those that make *Flesh their Arm*, and whose Heart *departs from the Lord*. Our Saviour had a Power on Earth to forgive Sins, because *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God*; in that he shew'd his su-
Phil. ii.
10.
 preme

preme Authority. The Jews, *who knew him not*, were often a murmuring, *this Man speaks Blasphemy, who can forgive Sins, but God only?* He never disputes the Principle they went upon, or pretended any Opposition to those Words of eternal Truth, *I, even I am he that blots out thine Iniquities.*

Ifa. xlv. 23. Pfal. cxxx. 2. *There is Forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared.* But he proves his Right to *pardon*, by his Power to *heal*; and gives his People an Opportunity of applying David's Words to him, *It is he that forgives thine Iniquities, and heals thy Diseases.* This is a Glory that he will no more give to another, than his Praise to graven Images. All the Hallelujahs in Heaven are directed to him; *THOU wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood*, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation. However, upon this head is God insulted, and Man enslaved.

Rev. v. 9.

Those Words, *Whose Sins ye remit, they are remitted, and whose Sins ye retain, they are retained*, relate to the Doctrine they preached, and not to any practical Authority they should have; that, according to their Gospel, and the way of Salvation laid out there, People were either *in their Sins*, or deliver'd from them. *He that believes shall be saved*, in defiance of all the Excommunications in the World; and *he that believes not shall be damned*, if he had ten thou-

thousand Absolutions. The Comfort of this is what we are never to receive from the mouth of a Creature, but *the Spirit witnesses with our Spirits, that we are the children of God.* With *this*, the Absolution of a Priest is *needless*, and without it, it is *groundless*. He can tell me no more than I know without him; and he can give me no more than I have; for if our Hearts condemn us not, then have we Confidence towards God.

A Power that the Apostles never *used*, is one that they never *had*, or never *knew*. They healed the Sick; they cast out Devils; they raised the Dead; and did *greater works* than Christ himself: this is what he foretold, and what he fulfill'd. But *which of them said at any time, Son or Daughter, be of good cheer, thy Sins are forgiven thee?* They preached the Gospel as we do, Re-^{Acts ii.}pent, and be baptized every one of you for ^{39.}the Remission of Sins: And again, Repent—^{iii. 19.}and be converted, and your Iniquities shall be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come. If they had such a Stock of healing Souls, it is strange that the new Testament never once has told us of their using it.

Simon Magus offer'd Peter a Sum of Money to purchase the Gift of God, that is, of retailing out the Holy Ghost. Peter says to him, *Thou art in the gall of Bitterness,*
and

and the bond of Iniquity. If he ~~was~~ said this of him for proposing to *buy*, what a bond of Iniquity is there upon them who pretend to *sell*? But he bids him *repent, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him.* This Peter said himself; and they are none of his *Successors*, who talk of Forgiveness in *any other way.* These would never have refused his Money, but sold him the *Pardon*, if they could not impart the *Power.*

Here is then the difference between us. We are both convinced that our Justification comes from *another.* This is a thing to be received on each side. The only question is, *From whom we have it?* We declare with the Prophets and Apostles, that *it is God that Justifies.* *He is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins.* We beg it of him: We take it from him. I acknowledged my transgression, says David, and *Thou forgavest the Iniquity of my sin.* 'Tis God's peculiar: *There is none like unto thee, who passest by the transgression of the remnant of thine heritage.* He does it for his own name sake. *He reconciles us to himself.* And therefore to ask it of a Creature, is making that creature an *Idol*: And he that pretends to bestow it, gives it out, that *he himself is God.* And no wonder that he is *worshipped*; and that to him *every knee shall bow*, when he dares to say, what none but Christ ought,

Look

Psal.
xxxii. 5.

Mic. vii.
18.

2 Thess.
ii. 4.

Look unto Me all ye ends of the Earth, and be ye saved. This is all Mimickry, Imitation, and Farce; in a concern, where no likeness, or resemblance ought to be allow'd: For a Saviour is no more represented by a Sinner, than a Man is by a Monkey; such a one can pretend to no more than an ugly likeness. Isa. xiv. 22.

Secondly, They relieve themselves, or at least think they do so, by another thing, that is all their own, and that is an *Indulgence*; which is a Pardon, not only for Sins that are committed, but those that shall be. This is forgiveness in Bank, a Stock beforehand. Our Saviour never did any thing like it in all his life. His way of speaking was to this purpose; Behold thou art made whole, go thy way and sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. He gave no protection in sin, and much less a protection for it; but a caution, a guard, the terrors of the Lord, that a Man might take heed to his ways.

But their Scheme is turning the *Grace of God into Wantonness*. 'Tis vile enough to say, Let us sin, that *Grace* may abound; but it is ten thousand times worse, to have *Grace*, that *Sin* may abound. Christ came to destroy the Works of the Devil; But such a Doctrine as this makes People his *Factors*. An *Indulgence* is nothing else but a *Pass* to carry

Rom. v.
20.

a Sinner with all his filthiness, through the Kingdom of Darkness, to the full enjoyment of that in Light: so that we must invert the Scripture-account of Pardon, That where *Sin did abound, Grace does much more abound*: Instead of that, let us take the case as we find it, That where the Papal Grace does abound, Sin *does*, or at least *may*, much more abound. Blessed be God, that as Human Nature itself will rise in contempt of such a Folly, there is nothing in our Scheme to damp an indignation so well deserv'd.

1 Pet. i.
18.

Thirdly, Their great hope of this benefit, is from their *Buying* it. We are redeem'd *without Money, and without Price*. The whole Model of the Gospel is agreeable to that declaration, That it is not by *such corruptible things as Silver and Gold*, but by the precious Blood of the Son of God. Indeed our Salvation is all paid for: But that is done by the only Person, who could go to the Rate of it. He has *bought us with a price*. Being *justified freely by Grace*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom. iii.
1.

Isa. lv.

The proclamation made in *Sion*, is never to be repeated at *Rome*: Ho every one that *thirsteth, come ye to the Waters*; and *he that hath no Money come, yea come buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without Price*. 'Tis strange, that they, who think so lightly

of

of a Saviour's Purchase, should attribute so much to a Sinner's: if the Blood of Christ does not deserve a happiness, that a little handful of Silver and Gold should do it. O vile Indignity to the Lord that bought us! as if He had not paid enough, but that something of our own is to make it out.

Well may it be said, That such People are given up to strong delusions, to believe a lie, that they all may be damn'd, who have not pleasure in the truth, but pleasure in unrighteousness. In that awful Scripture, you may observe these three things: ^{2 Thess. ii. 12.}

1. That they are under strong delusions, ἐν ἰσχυρῇ πλάνῃ, the efficacy of error; it spreads over 'em, and operates in 'em, like a searching, running, swelling Poison. It works in all their Thoughts and Hopes, their Desires and Passions, and gives a general fermentation to the whole Power of human Nature. It makes them delirious in themselves, and raging against others.

2. God has given them up to it. He sent it. 'Tis a preternatural way of thinking, which they are got into. He lets 'em be deceiv'd; and condemns 'em to the darkness, which they have chosen, rather than light. They who have seen the folly of Processions in foreign Countries can give you a better account how popular a frenzy the

Nations are under. For my part, I can only judge of it, as I read of it, That the whole Kingdom of the Beast is full of darkness.

3. This is the sad condition of those, who receive not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved. A contempt of Christ's Righteousness is that, which provokes God to send these delusions, and prepares people to take 'em. He is jealous of his own Honour; And when we give up *that*, he will trample ours in the dust. Nor is his Honour more concern'd in any thing, than the dignity of that Person, who came to save us; and the Simplicity of that Righteousness, by which he did it. He will not have his Deity debas'd, and made titular; nor his Satisfaction mingled, or made needless. And if we are in the dark about either of these, we shall be like all People, who walk in the dark; having set out wrong in the beginning, they'll continue so to the end.

Fourthly, They have recourse to Reliques, the Rubbish of Time and Nature; mere heaps of rags and rottenness; as if their Church was like those whited Sepulchres, which our Saviour speaks of, all manner of painting, gilding, and carving on the outside; but the chief Contents, the things within, are a collection of dead mens bones, and all uncleanness. You have heard how false and foolish the

Sto-

Stories are, which they tell upon these occasions. But it is plain, that *God has hid their eyes from understanding*; and they continue *mad upon their Idols*, by the regard they yet have to weeping Saints and tricking Sinners, to groaning Boards, and bubbling Blood. We hope the Night is far spent, and the Day is at hand. By the rumbling and tumults among the *Papal Powers in Europe*, they seem to be heaving for the Liberties of Human Nature, and the Glory of Christianity. And perhaps the only reason, why *Satan* has so great a rage among *us* is, because he sees that *his time is but short*. But if all these things were true; if their *lying Wonders* were real; What have they to do with the Salvation of a Sinner? What is a Chip of the Cross, a Piece of the Spear, or a few of the Nails, to the comfort of my Soul? *Thomas* was blam'd for saying, If I do not see *the Print of the Nails*, I will not believe: But he had been worse than an Infidel, to insist upon having *the Nails themselves*. If the *Pope* in his present Collection should get all the Wood of the Cross, he would be no better a person for it, than the great *Turk* is by keeping the *Sepulchre*.

I don't see with what decency they call that *the Holy Cross*, which the Scripture has held out to my Soul as *an Accursed Tree*. 'Tis Christ's bearing our Sins in his own Body upon the Tree, that brings us to God. He
is

is there expos'd as *the brazen Serpent* was, not to be distributed in Filings and Scrappings, in Splinters or Powders, but to be *look'd at*. Thus is the Son of Man *lifted up*, that *whosoever believes in Him may not perish, but have everlasting Life*. 'Tis not any thing of a *dead Saviour* that will answer our case; but his *ever living* to make intercession for us. If I were in those Countries, I ought to say to the Strolers, the Pilgrims, as the Angel did to the Women, who kept hovering about his Grave, *Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here*. Though we have known Christ after the Flesh; henceforth *we know him no more*.

There was in the Old Testament a declaration of Abhorrence against them that *lodg'd amongst the Graves and Monuments*. And what we read of the Poor Man that *lived among the Tombs* in our Saviour's time is not for our Imitation: The Devil was *cast out of him*, that he might do so no more; and therefore whilst he did it, the Devil was in Him.

What have I to do with the *Bones and Ashes* of those that are *dead in the Lord*? 'Tis barbarous to break the promise, that God has given them, That *they shall rest in their Beds*. In all my inquiries after Salvation, God sends me to the *Church*, and not to the *Charnel*. The living, *the living* among his Ministers are to praise him, not the

the dead, and they that go down to silence. Our trust is in a Saviour that *was dead* indeed, and by that he *laid in his Merit*; but he is *alive* again, and by that he *uses it*.

Fifthly, If we are not to be saved by Works of Righteousness that *we* have done, how vile is it to tell us, that we must be so by the Works of Righteousness that *others* have done? If there is no Imputation of *Christ's* Righteousness, there can be none of *theirs*. To suppose a Virtue in them, after they can do nothing at all, looks like a Judgment upon those, that have *rejected one Imputation*, that they are left to *dream out another*.

The Jews had no vanity so gross as this in all their Religion. *Moses* was their great Meritorious Saint, (if any one might be called so) but *his Grave no one knows unto this day*. *David* was the next in order; but he is both dead and buried; and *his Sepulchre* remain'd among 'em untouch'd, unrifled, unregarded in any Act of Worship. They were blamed for saying they had *Abraham* for their Father, or laying any weight on a relative Privilege. It was no more to the rich Mans five Brethren, that their Father *Abraham* was in *Heaven*, than that their *elder Brother* was in *Hell*. Their concern was with *Moses* and the *Prophets*; and
Christ

Christ is he of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write. 'Twas the work of all those Holy Men, that Cloud of Witnesses, to lead us to Jesus, and not lead us from Him.

Sixthly, The Intercession of Saints and Angels, whom they ply with so many Invocations, is another argument how little they can trust to a Moral Righteousness. And therefore why do the People rage, who themselves imagine a vain thing? They are angry with us for depending on One Intercessor, though they have so many of their own to a superfluity of naughtiness. We know that Christ prays for us; and him the Father hears. His Merit is the Incense, which goes up with the Prayers of the Saints upon that golden Altar that is before the Throne. But as for the dead, who know not any thing, whose love and hatred is ceas'd, and whose memory is forgotten, we must go to them, but they can't with any Act of kindness come back to us.

They are not gone to Heaven, to take Christ's work out of his hand: to make a Compound of their Merits with his; or be Assistants to Him in an Intercession, which is the Peculiar of the High Priest. When he trod the Wine-Press, it was alone; and of the People there was none with him. And his Actions before the Throne are as much individual as those upon the Cross.

Seventhly, Praying for the Dead is another of the poor shifts, that they are put to, in filling up the Gap they have made by rejecting the Righteousness of Christ; and especially when *Masses* are said for 'em upon that account, which in their opinion is offering a Sacrifice. Nay; if there is no imputation of the offering, that *Christ* made of himself, 'tis strange that there should be any *of theirs*, which, according to their own notion, is no better than *Crucifying him afresh*. They are in an endless toyl, and must be doing this work *often*: But we have the Comfort to know, that by *one Offering*, he has for ever perfected them that are sanctify'd. By these Sacrifices of theirs they have Gifts and Lands, and almost a *Kingdom in this World*. But our trust is in the Sacrifice of him, who had *none*. Our imputed Righteousness comes by *free Grace*; and theirs is to be *paid for*.

Thus have I consider'd this doctrine, of a Sinner's acceptance with God, and have done it the more abundantly, that I might give a testimony of my Zeal for that Faith, that was once deliver'd to the Saints.

1. Regard it as the Cause, the Principle, and indeed the Glory of the *Reformation*. If this is given up, the rest are scarce worth keeping. Here *our Fathers* begun; and here must *we*, in fighting the battles of the Lord.

2. Regard it as the great Interest of *your Souls*; the Matter of the Hope, that is set *before you*, and the Reason of the Hope that dwells *within you*. When you sit with the King at his Table, this is your *Wedding-Garment*. 'Tis this that pleads your Cause, that bears your Punishment, that washes your Robes, and that deserves your glory. You are made white in *the Blood of the Lamb*; and therefore διὰ τούτο, because of this, you are *before the Throne of God*, and serve him *Day and Night in his Temple*, and he that sets upon the Throne shall dwell among you.

I hope what you have heard is no other than *the Counsel of God*. * And as there is scarce any Doctrine more oppos'd and hated, more corrupted and mangled, it has been to me a Matter of Care and Conscience too; not to pervert your Minds from the Simplicity of the Gospel: I have heartily and honestly consider'd the Truth as it is in Jesus. From this arises *a Glory to God in the Highest*; it opens the way of *Peace upon Earth*; and is the best Argument of a *Good-will towards Men*, that he has provided a
Righ-

* Apparet nullam in rem seculis omnibus Satanam magis incubuisse, quam ut gratuitam fidei justificationem vel extingueret vel suffocaret.

Calv. in Gen. xv. 6.

Righteousness for those, who had none of their own. This was the Cause of the Reformation ; and will ever prove it to be of God. And it never fails to be the main Concern of every one, who has any serious Thoughts about his own Eternal Welfare. The Apostle had labour'd abundantly, and fulfilled his Ministry, as well as ever any one did ; but what he desires at last is, to win Christ, and be found in him.

I will now make the *Application* of this Phil. iii. Sermon a little more diffusive, that I may ^{8.} be manifest to every Man's Conscience in the sight of God. And therefore shall address my self to three sorts of People, of whom all our Assemblies are compos'd.

1. It may be said of some, as it was of the Jews, That they are *far from Righteousness* ; and never allow themselves to think at all about another World.

2. There are others, who turn their Duties and Devotions a wrong way, and expect a Righteousness from things, that can never give it.

3. I hope there are some, who value an Acceptance which God as the greatest Blessing, and look for it, as *Abraham* had it, only by an *Imputation*. And O God of our Father *Abraham send me good speed this day.*

First, I desire with pity and care, to exhort those, who *have not God in all their thoughts*; who live without him in *this World*, and are stark blind to the whole Interest of *another*. All their Meditation is to *live*, as long, and as great as they can, without a single Enquiry, what it is to *die*: They act with a Defiance, or at least with a Neglect of Eternity.

Can you think, that a *Swearer*, who goes rattling on without either fear or wit, has any dread of *falling into the hands of the Living God*, and both hearing and feeling the Thunder of his Power? The *Adulterer* that lives in a *filthy Conversation*, and can make a Mock at Sin, by his *filthiness and foolish talking*, has forgot there is a Day that will bring every *secret thing* to light, and every *idle word* to judgment. The Man that goes about to *defraud his Brother*, does it by a principle of Atheism. He'll venture the Anger of that God, who is *the Avenger of all such*. They that live without Worship; who value not in what manner they wear out the Sabbath of the Lord, feel not the powers of a *World to come*. These Mens Sins go *before-hand to Judgment*. A Drunkard has no more Religion than a Swine; nor a Swearer any more than a Devil: And some Mens they follow after.

1 Tim. v.
ult.

Such as are careful about their Families; and from a natural Honour hate the little low

low Deceits of those that walk in *Craftiness*; but as to any thing on the other side the Grave, it is as much out of mind, as it is out of sight. The Bible tells us of Sin, and Death, and Hell; of Christ and Grace, and Heaven; but they never *bear* the Word, or never *heed* it. Let me apply to these People with that compassion for *them*, which they ought to have for *themselves*.

(1.) Do but consider how dreadful your case would be, should you stand condemn'd by the Laws of the Country in which you live. If there was but a step between you and Death, what dark Thoughts would be ever haunting your Souls? Though perhaps you *might* escape, yet the Possibility of *not doing it*, would make you all your life-time *subject to bondage*. A perpetual *Suspence* would rack you in pieces with a perpetual *Suspicion*. Your whole business would be either to conceal your Guilt, or your selves. *A dread-* Job. xv.
ful Sound is in your ears; you believe not^{21.} that you shall return out of Darkness; you are waited for by the Sword. The Terror of a Goal, the Scrutiny of a Trial, and the Thunder of a Sentence set themselves around you. In the midst of *Laughter*, your Hearts are *sorrowful*, because the End of that *Mirth* may be *Heaviness*.

(2.) This is in very deed your Situation before God: His Law has condemn'd you.
And

And though these are Accounts that you have not look'd into; yet they are in *the Book of his Remembrance*. Every Oath is noted down; every Curse and Imprecation is filed up. And though you are apt to throw out those dreadful Sounds [God damn me] in bounce and blunder, he'll take you at your word; and it is pity but you should have, what you have both deserved and desired. Though you never *call* upon him, he will *call* upon you.

Psal. 1.

To say you have lived with an undefiled, and open Reputation, is good as far as it goes; but it falls short of the main thing: As God says to the Jews, *I will not reprove thee* for thy Burnt-Offerings, to have been continually before me. 'Tis true, they were so: But thou art wanting in the Vital, the Experimental Part of Religion. There is a Carcase without a Soul; and so it is here. You *owe no Man any thing*; you pay your Debts; attend your Business; and support your Credit. But is there nothing owing to God? How stand your Accounts with Him? Must not the Great Creator be the chief Creditor? And are you able to suppose, That because you don't *give* Him his Due, He will never *claim* it?

Heb. ix.
27.

(3.) This Enquiry is unavoidable: 'Tis appointed for all Men once to die, and after that the Judgment. Human Vengeance may be eluded and avoided; but there is

no

no running away from Death: no Place of Privilege, where *that* cannot find you, and will not reach you. It is certainly therefore the best way to do that, which must be done.

If we would judge our selves, we shall not be judged: But the less there has been of this, the more there is to come. *God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Eccl. xii. ult.

(4.) He has given you *space to repent*, but ye repented not. The greatest part of your Lives may be taken in this View. 'Tis *the Day* in which the things of *your Peace* lay before your eyes. Why were you not hurried away from the Cradle to the Grave? Why has not Sentence against your evil Works been speedily executed? Why were you not choaked with the first Oath? or drowned with the first Debauch? To what purpose are your Lives spun out? Only to *get* an Estate, and then to *leave* it? Has God no design in drawing out your Time to Twenty, Thirty, Forty, Fifty, or Sixty Years? Was it for nothing that he has shewn his Patience and Long-Suffering?

Nay, why has he given you his Book? and sent among you his Ministers? Blest you with an everlasting Gospel; and there drawn out *the Path of Life*? You have had the Report of Christ: The Mystery of his Birth, the Miracles of his Life, the Merit of his

2 Pet. iii.
13.

Act. xiii.
48.

his Death, and the Memorials of his Resurrection. Was this for no more than that you might be loaded with Riches, and hung with Titles? No; let me tell you, That *the Long-suffering of God is your Salvation*. To say, that these are things you seldom hear of, or never think of, is not your Excuse, but your Condemnation. Every one knows, that you *might* have regarded 'em; and God will let you know, that you *ought*. But in putting the Word of the Lord far from you, you *judge your selves unworthy of Everlasting Life*.

Secondly, I now turn my self to another sort; and they are such as live, and move, and have their being in a *Form of Godliness*, but are Strangers to the Power of it. They have a dally Task of Duties; and keep their rounds. They continue the Wheel of Life in a circular Motion; but look to nothing higher, better or more perfect, than their own Obedience; which, like a Spider's Web, is spun out from them, and then rolled about 'em. This was the case of the Jews; They *made many Prayers, fasted often*, and went about to establish a *Righteousness* of their own, with an *Ignorance* of what God had provided, and the want of *Submission* to it. So *they trusted in Vanity, and Vanity was their recompence*. I am not calling you off from these Duties; No, God forbid! But,

I. Do

1. Do you find no *Defect* in your Obedience? Is it as pure and perfect, as fair and fervent as it ought to be? Is there no Flatness in Prayer? no Distraction in hearing? Can you say as *Saul* did to *Samuel*, I have performed the Commandment of the Lord? or if you do, is it not with the same Hypocrisy? Have you no reason to complain of wandering Thoughts, or wearied Affections? This case is too good to be true, because we have most of these Groans, where there has been most of Religion. Upright Persons have complained of *deceitful* Hearts: and they that were ready to do good, that *evil was present with them*. So that if your Devotions are all *right*, 'tis well if they are not all *wrong*, *If we say we have not sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.* Joh. i. 8.

2. If you have *no* sense of Sin, you are hardned; and if you have *any*, what will you do with it? Here is a Burden upon you, and where will you throw it off? Perhaps you will *say*, as I fear many *think*, that you must strike off the Debt by an overbalance of Duty, and work it out: but remember that there is, and can be, no such thing. If your Actions are *more* than God has commanded, they want the *Nature* of Religion; if they are *less*, they want the *Value*. But if we suppose, what no Modesty will affirm, that they are exact and
F equal,

equal, yet what becomes of your former Iniquities? Here the answer will be, that God is gracious, and pardons what a Man did at the worst, when he sees that he now does *his best*. But,

3. 'Tis not what you and I say upon this head, but what God says. 'Tis not for a Prisoner to make Rules for the Judge, or determine the Method of his Trial; that is done to his hand. Indeed, if there is any thing in the Book of God to breathe into you such an Imagination, you may take it: But if there is not a Syllable to this purpose, (as I am sure there is not) 'tis talking without book, in a case where we ought to be at a point.

It is true, we are liable to Mistakes; but to be *mistaken* here, is to be *undone* for ever. What signifies your saying one thing, and God another? *Whose Words shall stand, his or yours?* Saving you, is giving the Lye to himself; if it be not in a Way that he has appointed, your Salvation would be an eternal Reproach upon his own Book: and consider where the Matter is like to fall.

4. How can you expect, that he'll account you righteous, in a wilful neglect of the Imputation that himself has appointed? He has had the Expence of it, and he will have the Glory. It has cost him very dear to give us a Redemption thro' the Blood of Jesus, and if it might have been brought about

about ~~another way~~, all that see him will begin to mock him; what a Vanity was his Incarnation, what a Waste were his Sufferings?

What he might have done, had there been no Redeemer, I know not: but I do know what he will do, now there is one. When he is revealed from Heaven in flaming Fire, 'tis to take vengeance on those that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of his dear Son. Now, is it a thing to be thought of? nay, is it to be wish'd for? that a Sinner should come to Heaven, who has not only broke the Law that kept him out, but despis'd the Gospel that would have brought him in? Can any thing be more true in the Character of an Unbeliever, or more righteous in his Sentence, than what our Lord says, *He will not come unto me that ye might have Life?* He alone has this Life, and therefore they that will not come, shall not live. *He that sins against me, wrongs his own Soul; all they that hate me, love Death.*

² Thes.
i. 7, 8.

Joh. v. 40.

Prov. viii.

ult.

Thirdly, I now conclude with an Application to those, who, though they abound in the Fruits of Righteousness, and would do so more and more, yet expect no Justification, but from that Obedience of Christ which is imputed to us for Righteousness. They are accepted in the Beloved, in whom

Eph. i.
6, 8.

they have Redemption, through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace. I will lay before you a few Particulars, that contain both your Duty and your Comfort.

1. Let your Justification influence your Sanctification. It is the best Argument you can have *for* it, and the best Impression you can have *in* it. Are you the *Ransomed of the Lord*? Come then to *Sion* with Songs, own the Worship of God, delight and abound in it. The Ordinances of the Gospel give you an Opportunity of serving your *Master*, and meeting your *Friend*. If you acted only by *Fear*, That has *Torment*, but *perfect Love casts out Fear*. The Love you contemplate in him, the Love you experience in your selves, will push you forwards, and make you like the *Chariots of a willing People*.

1 Joh. iv.
18.

Cant. vi.
ulr.

Rom. xiv.
8.

If we live, we live to the Lord, to his Will, to his Law, to his Honour; and if we die, we die unto the Lord, to his Order, to his Favour, to his Habitation: whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's. Here is but one Owner for two Worlds. We are his Property, his Peculiar, his Pensioners. And how attractive is the Argument, To this end Christ both died, and rose again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of Dead and Living? He had it in his View, and so should we. We rejoice
in

in his Love, and let him be triumphant in ours. By his Merit he has made us right-ful Subjects; by his Grace, a *willing People*.

2. Let your Sanctification lead you to your Justification: When you feel the one, reflect and look back upon the other. I desire to talk of this in a practical way.

" Here is a Duty performed: I have sought
 " the Lord in secret, mine Eye was only
 " upon him, his only was upon me; I
 " have paid him Worship, both in *my* Fa-
 " mily and *his* own, in the Assembly of
 " the Upright, and the Congregation. Or,
 " I have done some Act of Service to his
 " Name.

" Well, with what Temper of Mind
 " have I obeyed? We'll suppose the best,
 " with Life and Ardor, with Zeal and
 " Courage, with all Godliness and Hones-
 " ty: *Bless the Lord, O my Soul! 'tis his*
 " *Work* to assist thee, 'tis his *Goodness* to re-
 " ward thee: Thou may'st go thy way,
 " and eat thy Bread with joy, and drink ^{Eccl. ix.}
 " thy Wine with a merry heart, for God
 " has now accepted thy Work. Yet still re-
 " member, that it is upon *his* account,
 " for whose sake he has accepted thy Per-
 " son." As an excellent Divine once said,
 That what he had done pass'd for nothing,
 if it was not sprinkled with the Blood of
 Jesus. That which takes away all Sin from
 what

what we *have*, does the same by what we *do*.

But supposing I have the Iniquity of my holy things before me, my Deadness in Praying, the Unconcern of my Soul in Hearing, the Pride and Vanity that slide into my Charities; "Can God approve what I bewail, and justify the very thing that I my self condemn? Remember it is my Obedience, but not my Righteousness. They are other sorts of Works than mine, that have magnified the Law, and made it honourable: I fly from my own to them."

3. This will preserve you in the Pleasure of Religion. The Obedience of Christ is a Motive to all that is *right*, and a Healing to all that is *wrong*. Religion, without an eye to him, is dragging and drudging; but when he is ever before us, our Souls are rising, running, and flying. The Arguments of the Law, are only the Chain of a Slave; but those of the Gospel, are the Wings of a Dove.

A melancholy Christian is guilty of looking too much *into himself*, and too little to a Saviour. We pore upon the Disease, till we forget the Physician: and hence arise Complaints to this purpose; "O what a vile Heap of Thoughts and Affections are there within me! prophane, impure, haughty, revengeful, covetous, and un-
" be-

“believing! O my Soul, whither art thou
“going?”

Now if looking within is so dreadful
a Work, let us try what looking unto Je-
sus will do. “Behold, O Lord, I am vile,
“but here is the more Guilt for thee to
“pardon, here is the more Disorder for
“thee to cure. Experience tells me, that
“I can do nothing; but Faith tells me,
“that *thou* can’st do all. The best that
“can be said of *my* Righteousness is, that
“the Principle is imperfect, and the Ac-
“tions are *confused*; but *thine* is all right,
“and fair, and full: and therefore, as mine
“is not worth speaking of, *I will make*
“*mention of thine, even of thine only.*”

4. It will prepare you for the end of all
in the State of eternal Life. An everlasting
Righteousness is what Christ has now
brought in, and he will then bring it forth:
The Heavens shall declare his Righteousness,
and all Men shall see his Glory, in the Light
of the Place, and with the Shouts of the
People. *The Lamb is in the midst of the* Rev. v. 6.
Throne, in the heart of Life and Greatness;
but he is there as *one that has been slain,*
that you may ever know what your Re-
demption is worth, by ever seeing what it
cost. He has arrayed himself with Glory
and Majesty, but still it is with a *Vesture* Rev. xix.
dipt in Blood, to convince us, that though^{13.}
we are freely pardoned, yet we are dearly
bought.

bought. Let us now conclude, as we hope
 in a little while to begin, *To him that loved
 us, and washed us in our Sins in his own
 Blood, and has made us Kings and Priests to
 God and his Father, to him be Glory and
 Dominion for ever.*

FINIS.

ERRATA.

P. 9. l. 23. for *Christians* r. *Christianity*.
 P. 16. l. 1. for *bad* r. *bath*.
 P. 26. l. 13. for *sets* r. *sits*.

